



20 Years of Advancing Justice in Our Community & Beyond

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Brazilian Worker Center for All
Testimony of Maria Lima opposing the Act Concerning Domestic Service and Overtime Pay
Before the Committee on Labor and Public Employees
February 25, 2016

Good afternoon Chairmen and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Maria Lima, and I am 45 years old. I am here today with the Brazilian Worker Center opposing the *Act Concerning Domestic Service and Overtime Pay*. I am also here to deliver this information with the intent to bring awareness to all of you about the real situation of the domestic workers in CT.

I am a mother of two Brazilians, who have been living in this country with me for 10 years. I worked as a domestic for 6 years. I am here to talk about a particular experience that I had when I took care of an elderly lady, who was 86 years old, in Wilton, Connecticut.

My shift began at 5pm on Fridays and ended on Saturday at 8pm. During the night I had to wake up a few times to medicate this elderly lady, or to assist her with her physiological needs. She often asked to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, two or three times every 15-minutes. She was very needy for attention. I slept in a bed next to her, and sometimes she asked me to sit on her bed holding her hand so she could sleep. I held her hand knowing that the life of the helpless lady was in my hands. It was very difficult to take care of her because she was heavy and she could not walk; I had to move her from the bed to the wheelchair and vice versa. She was very afraid of falling down so she clutched on me, which required more effort on my part to carry her. I had to protect her from any accident; it was difficult for me to do so because that happened early in the morning, around 3am, and I

had already worked all day. My body needed to rest but I knew that I had the responsibility to take care of that elderly lady, and I had the commitment to always give my best as a caregiver.

One thing I cannot understand is how it could be that in the 21st century, in the midst of so many difficulties that society is facing, I have to come here to try to prevent an act that will bring disadvantages to workers who put so much love into their job. The domestic workers do what many families cannot do or will not do for their own family members. It is sad to know that an act such as this one may be approved and thereby lead our vulnerable elderly citizens to be neglected.

Thank you for your precious time listening to me.